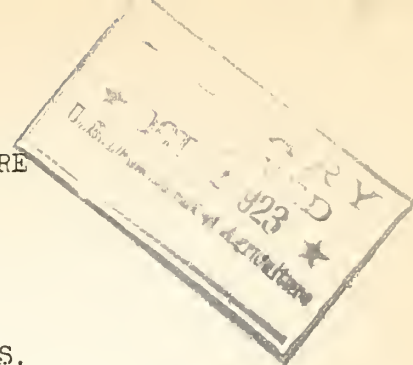


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Oct. '23

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY.



DIRECTIONS FOR TRAPPING POCKET GOPHERS.

There are a number of good pocket-gopher traps on the market, among them being the Roy, the Macabee, and the cinch type. They are durable and cheap, and a good trapper should capture a pocket gopher for each trap every twenty-four hours.

Select a freshly constructed mound and with a long-handled iron spoon proceed to locate the burrow. The mounds are always irregular and more or less fan-shaped, with the plugged lateral at the apex of the fan. Clean out the lightly plugged opening with the spoon, taking care to enlarge the opening sufficiently to fit the trap. Probe the lateral with the spoon in order to ascertain the location of the main runway. If the lateral is eight inches or more long, set the trap and, with a finger bracing the trigger pan, shove it into the opening until the pan is an inch or so below the surface. See-saw the trap firmly into place and leave the burrow open.

In case the lateral is too short to admit the trap, dig down to the main runway, clean out well, and place two traps, one facing either way. Leave the burrow open, as it is the air and light which cause the pocket gopher to return to repair the break. In doing so, the trap is sprung and a catch is made.

It is advisable to wire each trap and tie it to a stake, so as to prevent natural enemies of the pocket gopher from making away with it. White rags fastened to the stakes help to locate the traps readily, especially during the crop-growing season.

In order to cover a large field systematically, start trap lines along fence rows. Move each trap towards the center as a pocket gopher is caught. The traps should be looked after two or three times daily.

During a period when little work shows on the surface, active burrows may be found by digging up sections of old runways and watching for the work. The freshest mounds are observed early in the morning or late in the afternoon.

Trapping, as a rule, is a rather slow process for clearing much ground of pocket gophers. On small acreages, however, or as a supplement to extended poisoning operations, it is very effective. In irrigated sections, a few traps carried to the field can be easily looked after while the irrigating is going on. Trapping can be done at any time when the ground is not frozen.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY

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(Washington District)

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